



Episode 2x03:
"SALVAGE"

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Directed by George W. Krubski

Below are two sequences from "Salvage" that were eventually changed for pacing purposes. We at www.stillflying.net hope you'll enjoy this exclusive look at an earlier version of the script.

First, we present an alternate teaser, ending with Simon and Amy's meeting.

The second scene is an expanded version of the dining room scene, which includes a little more banter among Amy and the crew.

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INT. SERENITY – CARGO BAY

The cargo bay is filled with BALES OF GRAIN, tied up tightly and stacked by the walls. KAYLEE and SIMON lounge on a pair of bales laid out end to end, like a couch. Simon is distracted, periodically glancing at the open airlock door, through which PORT SOUNDS can be vaguely heard.

SIMON

Beer?

KAYLEE

The finest hops in the system, or so the Cap'n was told.

SIMON

And the Captain is a great expert on alcoholic beverages?
I'd think that's more Jayne's line.

KAYLEE

Figure Jayne's more for the drinkin' than the knowin'
about.

Beat. Simon doesn't respond and Kaylee touches his hand.

KAYLEE (cont'd)

Hey.

After a moment, Simon looks at her, smiles.

KAYLEE (cont'd)

You all right?

SIMON

Just thinking. River's out there...

(beat)

I should be able to enjoy a moment without worrying
about her. Especially since things have been so quiet the
last few weeks.

KAYLEE

Workin' for Emm and Eff seems to be workin' out.

SIMON

No Alliance. No bounty hunters. No slavers or angry crime
bosses. No... episodes.

(beat)

Still...

KAYLEE

Wash and Zoe'll take care of her. 'Sides, Athens was with the Alliance in the war.

Simon looks over at her, not reassured.

KAYLEE (cont'd)

So there won't be so much in the way of feds.

(beat)

Well, 'cept for the ones we're working for.

SIMON

I wouldn't exactly call the Alliance Reconstruction Brigade 'feds.'

KAYLEE

Really?

SIMON

Feds are efficient, domineering, and want to kill us. The ARB... They're a bunch of do-gooders. They want to fix things, bring the bright and shiny civilization of the Central planets to the outer worlds.

(to himself)

Guay, now I'm sounding like Mal.

KAYLEE

Fixing things up doesn't sound bad.

SIMON

It's not. They do good work, but... They can be a bit idealistic at times. They think they know what's best for the 'Verse.

KAYLEE

(sighs)

Like the rest of the Alliance.

SIMON

(mock brightly)

At least they don't do it with guns.

EXT. ATHENS – ESTABLISHING

Athens is somewhat modern, a mix of what we've seen of the Central Worlds and the outer planets.

EXT. ATHENS – STREETS – DAY

The street is a row of shops with residential buildings above them, not unlike a present-day American city. Hover-vehicles pass by in the street. One of the storefronts is a

SMALL RESTAURANT

Out of which steps MAL, who holds the door for AMY MARIN, a pretty blonde woman in her mid-twenties, dressed in the future equivalent of a business suit. JAYNE follows, carrying a decent-sized DOGGIE BAG.

AMY

Thank you for coming on such short notice.

MAL

Well, Miss Marin, when the Alliance says 'jump,' I say 'to which planet'?

The three of them walk down the street, Mal and Amy in the lead, Jayne a step behind, half-listening, but also taking in the sights.

AMY

I hope you won't consider me part of the Alliance as such. We at the ARB like to think we're more enlightened than our friends in Parliament and the military.

JAYNE

If she's so enlightened, why's she like to eat raw fish? What do you call it... squishy?

MAL

Sushi. And I will point out you're carrying a bagful of it.

JAYNE

Just want to scare the Doc.

MAL

Doc's a well-educated and fancy gentleman, Jayne. I'm sure he's had it before.

AMY

Sushi is a delicacy from Nippon, on Earth-that-Was.

(smiles back at Jayne)

At least you didn't eat the wasabi like popcorn. I made that mistake the first time.

JAYNE
(snorting laugh)
Ouch!

AMY
Guy I was with couldn't stop laughing.
(fondly, at the memory)
The bastard.

Mal catches Amy's elbow and steers her through the crowd, bringing her attention back to him.

MAL
All right, so start at the beginning again... This ship
crashed on a planet?

AMY
A gas giant. Artemis. It hasn't crashed yet, but it's about
to. We'll tow it if we can, rescue the crew and cargo if we
can't.

MAL
What are they carrying? 'Cause I got a cargo of my own
needs dropping off.

AMY
Terraforming didn't quite take on Actaeon, one of the
moons of Artemis. The ARB's helping the the colonists
bring in more equipment to get things back on track.

Jayne has punched out of the conversation. He looks around, and also reaches into his bag, feeling around for a bite of food.

MAL
Certainly a worthy cause. How come the <big and
wonderful> Alliance can't spare a cruiser or two to do
this? They fought hard enough for the right to.

AMY
You fought for the Independents, didn't you?

MAL
(sharply)
War's over, Miss Marin. Don't matter who we fought for.

AMY
I didn't mean anything.
(beat)

The nearest Alliance ships are making a scheduled sweep of the quadrant, looking for pirates and slavers. They can't be diverted for three days. By then it might be too late. We're just lucky that one of the patrol ships heard the signal and forwarded it to the ARB.

MAL
(mutters)
Ain't we just.

AMY
I understand your frustration with the Alliance. But—

MAL
I don't believe you do. I—
(beat)
Jayne?

Mal realizes they've gotten a bit ahead of Jayne, who's window-shopping in front of a grocery store, munching awkwardly on sushi. Mal walks back to him, Amy trailing in his wake.

JAYNE
(to himself)
Would you look at that...melons.

As Mal and Amy come up, Jayne gestures to a large stack of honeydew melons, behind an LCD on-sale sign.

JAYNE (cont'd)
And chicken tenders...
(to Amy)
They real?

AMY
They are.
(to Mal, smiling)
The Alliance does some good things. Chicken tenders for everybody!

MAL
(not smiling)
But would you look at the prices?

INT. CLOTHING STORE – DAY

ZOE, WASH, and RIVER are gathered around a rotating display of SLINKY DRESSES. Zoe is staring at one of the dresses as it goes around, Wash at the price

tag hovering over it. River's got a fistful of skittles-type CANDY, which she's carefully eating color-by-color.

WASH
(playfully reluctant)
That much coin, you could buy a lot of fuel.

ZOE
But it's so slinky... Fuel's not slinky.

WASH
I have no disagreement on that particular point.

RIVER
Not practical.

Zoe and Wash turn to her. She hasn't looked up. She appears to be counting the remaining green candies.

RIVER (cont'd)
No place to put your gun.

ZOE
There is that...
(to Wash)
Think I'd look silly with a holster over this?

She mimes a holster that would sling through her cleavage.

WASH
<Darling>, wear that and you can leave the dress behind.

River giggles.

ZOE
Dear! Not in front of the children!

WASH
Right, right. Babysitters for the day...

INT. SERENITY – CARGO BAY – SAME TIME

Simon and Kaylee are still sitting on the bales, Kaylee leaning on Simon's shoulder.

WASH (cont'd, VO)
I hope those crazy kids are grateful.

SIMON
Your own private moon...

KAYLEE
If Zoe can have one, so can I!

Kaylee's trying to lead Simon somewhere, but he's not following, taking her words literally.

SIMON
Isn't that a bit ambitious?

KAYLEE
Got to have dreams, don't I?

INT. ATHENS – PORT CHECKPOINT – SAME TIME

Mal, Jayne and Amy are at the checkpoint, a large roofed area with glass walls. Amy passes her suitcase through security while a bored-looking CLERK in an Alliance uniform returns weapons to Mal and Jayne.

CLERK
There you go. Thank you for visiting Athens.

They take their weapons. Jayne obsessively checks his, while Mal simply glances and holsters. They pass through the doors and into

THE LANDING AREA

Making their way toward Serenity. Mal is in the lead, and Amy comes up next to him.

AMY
I'm sorry if I lectured you back there.

MAL
Ain't no one lectures me. You was just talking.

AMY
It's just something I do sometimes, so if I did, I didn't mean to. It's just that out here, I sometimes think people don't understand the Alliance and the great good that it's capable of—

MAL
But on my boat, there's any lecturing, I'll do it.

INT. SERENITY – CARGO BAY – SAME TIME

Simon has given Kaylee a bit more of his attention.

SIMON

So what would you have on it? Your little moon?

KAYLEE

Water. Lots of water. Like that paradise moon. You know, we were on... Where we... Y'know...

Kaylee leans back, bringing her face toward Simon's. He doesn't respond appropriately.

SIMON

Yeah, that was a good time...

Kaylee rolls her eyes and makes a last ditch effort. She moves closer.

KAYLEE

(breathy)

And I'd have gardens, with strawberries...

Kaylee's face is right next to his. Simon seems to finally notice.

SIMON

Strawberries sound...

(beat, they get closer)

Nice.

Almost close enough for a kiss. Then—

There's a NOISE from outside.

SIMON

I think they're back.

The mood is spoiled as Simon abruptly stands and heads toward the airlock door. A beat later, Kaylee follows.

Mal walks up the ramp as Simon reaches the airlock door—

MAL

Doc.

—Followed immediately by Amy.

Simon starts as he sees her.

SIMON

Amy?

Her eyes go wide and she freezes in midstep, almost tripping Jayne, who is right behind her, in the middle of dropping a piece of sushi into his mouth.

AMY

Simon?

Deleted Material

INT. SERENITY – DINING ROOM

The crew sits around the table eating, Simon flanked by Amy and Kaylee.

AMY

Mmm... This is really good.

ZOE

Not sure I concur, but kind of you to say.

Jayne grins.

AMY

I was afraid you were all going to be subsisting on old army rations.

SIMON

Like that camping trip to the Red Mountains?

MAL

We do eat our share of protein.

WASH

More than our share. But sometimes there... Oh, that's right. That's just more protein.

Amy and Simon are smiling now, in anticipation of the shared story.

SIMON

These were worse. That summer, I had a few weeks off from my residency, so a group of us went camping.

AMY

My cousin sent along as a joke, these army ration bars he'd kept around... He'd been in the quartermasters.

SIMON

Flavorless stuff, like chewing soap.

MAL

Some of us are a bit familiar.

SIMON

Anyhow, we had all our food in a cooler. We left it at camp and went hiking, and when we came back—

SIMON AND AMY (together)
A skunk!

JAYNE
Wha?

AMY
Forest animals... <Horrid little monsters>.

SIMON
(to Jayne)
A bit like you, actually.

Amy laughs and reaches for Simon's hand. He doesn't take hers, but he also doesn't knock it away.

SIMON
Anyway, this <horrid little monster> had come in and eaten everything!

AMY
Except...

SIMON
Except the ration bars!

By now, Simon and Amy are laughing almost hysterically. River is also laughing – a harsh, uncomfortable laugh – but the rest are simply smiling cordially.

AMY
Left bits of the cooler strewn all over!

SIMON
The campsite was a mess!

AMY
So we had to eat those gorram ration bars the whole way back!

Amy and Simon laugh for a few beats, until they gradually realize that most other folks aren't. They trail off, and River stops as well... a little too late after everyone else. There is an uncomfortable silence.

MAL
That's a mighty, uh, fine tale.

One last round of laughter from River.

Beat.

KAYLEE
So... You're friends from college?

AMY
We dated my sophomore year.

The subtext between Amy and Kaylee goes over Simon's head.

SIMON
I was at the med school while Amy was an undergrad.

KAYLEE
I see. How interesting.

ZOE
What do they teach you at Central Worlds colleges?

AMY
Lots of math. Literature, history... More math...

MAL
Good they teach you something worthwhile.
(beat)
And I am, of course, referring to the literature. Can't stand math myself.

As Mal and Amy talk, most of the others dig in to their food. River watches the interplay intently.

AMY
I'd think a freighter captain would have quite a lot of need for math.

MAL
I get by on luck. Like a cat. Cats are lucky, aren't they?

WASH
You know, I think you can juggle—

Zoe, handing a plate to Wash, silences him with a stare.

RIVER
They have nine lives.

JAYNE
(mouth full)
Not sure if that's lucky, but it ain't nothin' to sneeze at.

MAL
Nine lives, that's it. I'm a cat.

RIVER
No fur. No tail.

MAL
I'm undercover. No tail.

Simon looks up from his plate.

SIMON
Didn't some cultures on Earth-That-Was worship cats?

MAL
(to the crowd)
There, you see.

AMY
Some others ate them.

MAL
(to Simon)
Now, this one's almost as creepifyin' as your sister.

ZOE
Now that's an idea.
(sizing Mal up)
We wouldn't have to eat protein again for... a week?

AMY
I know a few good recipes. Well, they're for rabbit, but I could adapt them.

MAL
Can we go back to the worship idea?

JAYNE
I ain't worshipping no cat. One of `em scratched me once, real bad.

SIMON
And what were you doing to it?

JAYNE
Nothing. It just got in my bunk.

Uncomfortable beat. Amy comes to Jayne's rescue.

AMY
(to Mal)
I'm surprised you answered the call, Captain. I wasn't expecting something quite so... roguish.

MAL
Well, I am a good upstanding citizen of this grand Alliance.

AMY
That was supposed to be a compliment.

MAL
As was what I said.

AMY
I know there are abuses, but look at what we're building. Medicine, communications, even the most basic things need to be brought to too many places.

MAL
If they're going to be going about it, they could handle it better.

AMY
We can't make every place look like the Central Worlds overnight. Rome wasn't built in a day.

MAL
And there's lots of folks were undoubtedly glad about that. Personally, I wish you all would take more time.

AMY
And leave people to die of preventable diseases, to get hurt in pointless local conflicts, to feel scarcity when there should be plenty?

MAL
To let them find their own destiny. Do it their own way.

AMY
You'd condemn millions to wretchedness so you could be free?

MAL
Ain't wretchedness if no one owns you.

Amy and Mal look at one another. Amy shakes her head a little – she can't get through to him.

WASH
(defusing, reaching across table)
Um, could I get some of that, uh, protein?